(d) The following steps have been taken to make good the loss and protect and preserve it against further damage:—

(i) Fire lines are prepared along the forest roads and across the forest.

(ii) Fire fighter teams are deployed at sensitive points.

(iii) Forest watchers are deployed in the hills for early detection of forest fire.

(iv) Fire towers are erected to detect the forest fires.

(v) The forest area is well linked with the modern wireless network.

(vi) The field officers and employees are provided with vehicles to acess the forest fire sites.

(vii) Programs of environment education and awareness are carried out through nature education camps and meeting with villagers.

(viii) Forest personnel are trained for fire prevention and combating forest fires.

(ix) Intensive patrolling by staff.

(x) Regulation of traffic by staff.

(e) The latest estimation of Asiatic lion and leopard population in Gir National Park, Sanctuary and adjoining forest and rural areas, as reported by the State, are as under:—

Sl. No.	Name of the species	Population (Numbers)
1	Asiatic Lion	291
2	Leopard	222

Tribals Dependent on Forests

†4688. SHRI JAYANTILAL BAROT: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the percentage and number of tribals still dependent on forests;

(b) the steps Government are taking to promote natural production of precious forest herbs by the tribals; and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) the efforts Government are making to raise the forest based employment?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) Large number of tribal population is dependent on forests. However, estimates of percentage and number are not available at the macro level.

(b) The Government of India have set up National Medicinal Plants Board to encourage natural production of valuable herbs in the form of *in-situ* conversation and cultivation of such plants in the country. During the last three years more than 1500 projects, ahve been sanctioned to various Government Orgainzations, individuals, Non Government Organization etc. for conservation and production of medicinal plants in the country including tribals areas also.

(c) The Government have provided employment and livelihood opportunities, through the Joint Forest Management programme and by implementing National Afforestation Programme through Forest Development Agencies, in the states which is targeting 104 million mandays wage employment during 10th Five Year Plan.

BRT System

4689. SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that 'Bagota' model would soon mark Delhi breathe easy by adopting the Bus Road Transport (BRT) system;

(b) whether the ministry has undertaken any study about using the BRT system in Delhi and other cities;

(c) if so, the findings of the study undertaken in this regard; and

(d) whether Government are thinking of stopping pollution in the cities like Delhi, Hyderabad by adopting BRT system?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) to (d) The Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi (IIT Delhi) and the Institute of Transportation and Development Policy (ITDP), United States have undertaken studies and recommended ways to introduce the 'Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) System'. As per the conclusions of the study, implementation of BRT System can provide benefits of time saving by bus commuters, reduction in traffic